

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**CLARK COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Commission Chambers
Las Vegas, Nevada 89106
July 20, 2016
6:30 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: WILLIAMS, KEITH (KW) – Non-Profit Humane Group, Chair
SMITH, PAMELA (PS) – Animal Breeder or Handler, Vice Chair
D.V.M. FRANCO, KIMBERLY (KF) – Veterinarian**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: BURTON, KIMMIE (KB) – Large Animal Owner or Equine Conservation
LEVINE, LISA (LL) – General Public
GONZALEZ, ANA (AG) – Student**

- 1. Call to Order**
Keith Williams (KW), called the meeting to order.
- 2. Roll Call**
Members announced themselves present. Kimmie Burton absent (unexcused), Lisa Levine absent (excused), and Ana Gonzalez absent (excused). Quorum.
- 3. Public Comment**
KW opened public comment. No public comment. Public comment closed.
- 4. Approval of May 18, 2016 minutes**
KW asked for a motion to approve the May 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes. PS motion to accept, KF second, all in favor, no opposition. Motion passed.
- 5. Approval of Agenda**
KW asked for a motion to approve July 20, 2016 agenda. PS motion to approve, KF second, all in favor, no opposition. Motion passed.
- 6. Receive a presentation from Community Cat Coalition of Clark County (C5) regarding their organization and programs.**
Barbara Justil (BJ), C5, shared the mission statement and brief history of C5. In 2009 Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) was formed by citizens to help population of feral and stray cats; C5 incorporated in November 2009 and received 501C3 status, March 2010. C5 has TNR'd 25,000 cats since May 31, 2016. BJ detailed the staffing of volunteers to include 8 directors, 24 trappers, 6 phone support personnel, 7 staging and 5 clinic support, to total 50 volunteers. The average length of the volunteer's service with C5 is 4 years. BJ shared the statistic that unaltered feral cats live 1 to 3 years whereas spayed/neutered feral cats live 8 to 10 years. C5 partners with Heaven Can Wait, Las Vegas Valley Humane Society, independent trappers and colony caretakers resulting in a 75% deduction of shelter admissions and euthanasia. BJ detailed their operating budget and explained the five year plan to TNR a minimum of 3,500 feral/stray cats per year with the goal of a 90% deduction of shelter admissions and euthanasia's.

PS stated that she was impressed with the 75% reduction in admission and euthanasia in the shelter and that she has heard through word of mouth that the C5 is a positive program to have.

KW opened public comment.

Joshua Cowart, Save Our Exotics, asked for clarity on what C5 is doing to protect native species and are the cats being reintroduced to areas they were taken from or to new locations. KW answered that cats trapped are returned to the location where they were picked up; KW stated a

goal is to reduce the impact of the animals on the landscape, environment, native wildlife and reduce the suffering. Public comment closed.

7. Discuss and provide recommendations on tethering laws in Clark County.

KW asked for the speaker to come forward. Speaker asked that the board look into establishing laws on the local level. It was presented that in the few states that have banned chaining the language is ambiguous. It has been opined that the state of Nevada is 10 years behind animal protection laws. KW pardoned the speaker and pointed out for formalities they needed to introduce themselves. Speaker introduced herself as Annoula Wildridge (AW). AW stated that the animal welfare pertaining to the chaining of animals is due to the risk of exposure, deprivation of water, lack of shade/shelter, risk of hanging themselves, risk of abuse from humans or other animals, denial of social needs, lack of the ability to escape in emergency situations, potential to suffer psychological damage. It is believed that an otherwise friendly and docile dog may become neurotic, unhappy, anxious and often aggressive. AW stated chained dogs often suffer from raw sores due to improperly fitting collars and the dog's efforts to escape confinement. Photos presented. AW advised that in July 1996, the ASPCA, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), numerous animal experts and the US Department of Agriculture issued a statement in the federal register in opposition of tethering, stating that the continuous confinement of tethered dogs is inhumane. A tether can restrict the dog's movement and may become entangled, potentially causing injuries. AW shared photos of tethered dogs to detail the physical and emotional damage. AW stated consequences outside animal welfare include public safety, as a chained dog is said to be more dangerous than a fenced dog. The bite risk associated with tethered dogs is said to be higher, as they are believed to be three times more aggressive. AW also stated economically, tethered dogs can negatively affect property values. AW presented 5 pages of testimonies from realtors to include their struggles with selling properties adjacent to chained dogs and why a tethering ban would be beneficial to the community. AW shared a letter from Stacey Rombach, publisher of the Homes Illustrated and Las Vegas Pet Scene Magazine, which summarized the concerns of tethering dogs and why there is a need for anti-tethering laws. AW proposes that an anti-tethering law would help reduce the number of nuisance calls and help the overcrowding in shelters due to less chained dogs becoming pregnant and over populating the area. AW suggests using Public service announcements (PSAs) to help make the ban more enforceable. Animal control could provide education, and volunteer groups could be established to provide fencing to individuals who have dogs spayed/neutered. AW stated that pets/dogs are a choice, like swimming pools, and are considered property. AW stated that if pool owners are required to have safety precautions, dog owners should also have pertinent safety precautions.

KW opened questions from the board. No questions, board comment closed. KW opened questions to the public.

Karen Layne (KL), Las Vegas Valley Humane Society, stated she agreed with AW but that ordinances regarding animals exposed to the heat take precedence over anti-tethering. KL referenced that HSUS, rural counties and Animal Control did not support the 2009 anti-tethering bill that allowed animals to be tethered for longer than 8 hours a day. KL stated that the committee must prioritize bills and believes the HSUS is largely responsible for proposing changes at the state level. KL states she does not oppose a bill, but there are ordinances that need to be prioritized above this issue. Emily Lewis (EL), Clark County resident, stated she wanted to introduce herself as this was her first committee meeting and that she wanted clarification on the statement regarding that the ordinance must be addressed at the state level before the local level. KW stated there are animal issues that can be addressed at either state or local level like tethering and asked Jason Allswang (JA), Chief of Code Enforcement, for confirmation. JA stated the issue is of preemption, state law NRS 574 sets up standards on how to properly tether dogs and since there is existing framework, the county may be preempted from outlawing it. JA stated there was a bill adopted at the last legislative session that allowed counties to make amendments to codes for

matters of local concern that will not affect other counties in the state. JA is awaiting a response from the DA on this matter. EL agreed that the best way to go would be to get it passed at the state level but this is an important matter to address at the local level as well. Ralph Manich (RM), Pitbull advocate, stated his support of an anti-tethering law because people tend to tether aggressive dogs which he believes is to be a higher risk, should they escape the tether. RM stated based on his experience in San Diego, San Francisco and Las Vegas, he agrees that tethering should be illegal. Harold Vosko (HV) stated he supports anti-tethering and states that both heat and tethering changes are necessary. KW closed public comment.

KF stated that as a vet she has seen many dogs lost to excessive heat and tethering. KW addressed that the concern is for the neglect and care of animals. PS asked for more awareness for care of animals not just a ban of one particular issue. PS stated it is not about tethering the animal but the cruelty and neglect. PS proposed a person who owns an animal must take an educational class on proper welfare for their animal. KF inquired about commercials similar to drowning prevention, to do community outreach and education on the effects of tethering. JA responded that we can reach out to the media team to do an outreach like we have done with the heat. AW asked that JA follow up with DA about what can be done at the local level or education options and potential committees.

KW asked for an agenda item to be added for the next meeting with an update of the DA decision and potential PSA outreach. PS motioned to discuss updates at the next meeting, KF second, all in favor, no opposition, motion passed.

8. Discuss and provide recommendations on training programs for Animal Control and its contractors.

KW asked JA for the overview on Animal Control Officers' training programs. JA answered that Animal Control officers do not get any formal training unless it is free of charge. Officers need a minimum of 3 years of animal handling experience, but their training program consists of on the job training accompanied by taser and baton training with park police and tranquilizer training with other jurisdictions. Clark County Animal Control looks to the state to provide a technical large animal emergency rescue course. CCAC sends a number of officers (2-3) each time, however, it could be 3-4 years before an officer can complete the course or get a renewal.

KW asked JA if he feels the level of training and opportunities are adequate and if the training is readily available if funded. JA responded, any national training organization can be brought to town, which would require funding and several weeks of the organization.

PS asked if there are a regular amount of large animal issues. JA responded there have not been many large animal issues in the past few months. KW opened public comment.

KL brought up the wildfire and flooding in California, illustrating the need for large animals to be relocated in a case of an emergency; the same issues may occur in Moapa thus the need for training also exists locally. KL believes large animal handling classes should be provided and that during the next legislative session a request for funding should be proposed. Public comment closed.

KW proposed to encourage the state through the Department of Agriculture to supply funding for training. KW asked for a motion to recommend to commissioners to provide funding for Animal Control officer training in the area of handling large animals and investigative training. PS motioned KF second, all in favor, no opposition. Motion passed.

9. Discuss and provide recommendations on emerging issues to be addressed by the committee at future meetings

KW asked committee members for issues to be addressed in future meetings. No comment. KW closed item.

10. Comments by the General Public

JA introduced Victor Zavala as the new Lieutenant who replaced Dawn Firth. Harold Vosko, HCWS, presented the reestablishment of summit meetings for C5, LVVHS, and HCW with animal control groups to create better relations and solve problems. HV stated the purpose is for all 501C3 organizations, rescue groups with proper spay/neuter programs, all animal control groups, the Animal Foundation, Henderson Shelter and Boulder City to meet and establish goals like reducing shelter intakes, to share results and ideas to work collectively for positive progress for animals. Meeting will take place either Thursday August 11th or August 18th at the Pueblo Room at the Government Center from 2pm-4pm, RSVP needed by August 4th. Public Comment closed.

11. Next Meeting Date

September 21, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

12. Adjournment

KW motion to adjourn; PS second, motion passed. Meeting adjourned.